customs we may have, we can abridge those to do what the whole House consents to do.

There may have been, and there may well be, sound reasons under the circumstances where it was felt by some that it may have been in the national interest to change the motion. I do not want to get into that side of the debate. What I have to say to hon. members is that, in my view, what happened was improper and an abuse. I am not in a position to change it, but I view it as a very serious matter. However, I want members to know, and I want the public to know, that it was done by consent and we are now all bound by it. I would hope that not again for a long, long time, if ever, would hon. members, such as the hon. member for Saint-Denis, the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway, or others, have to rise to complain about an event which, while procedurally proper because of the consent, in my opinion, ought not to have happened.

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Rocheleau (Hull—Aylmer): Mr. Speaker, I apologize. You rose, and I simply wanted to comment on what the Chair and my colleagues just said.

Friday, unfortunately, I was in the House as well. I was called to the telephone, so I had to leave for a few minutes. However, I must admit we had been told the same vote would be taken Tuesday on the amendment, the sub-amendment and the main motion. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the House made its decision and I also understand your comments. I feel it is inappropriate for the House to proceed in this manner, and I wish we could reconsider.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: I have other points of order. I am aware of them and will deal with them as I can. I think in deference to the hon. member for Calgary West and maybe another member, we should proceed.

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PRIVILEGE

HOUSE LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, the point of order just concluded is of some interest to me, both in the fact that it was argued before the question of privilege and that it would indicate your personal sense of importance about it. Your comments in conclusion are in reality a reflection on the leadership of the House that was present on Friday and the leadership of the House officers charged with certain responsibilities in the Chamber which, in part at least, is an essential element of the question of privilege about which I wish to speak.

I want to say thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your good offices in bringing the hon. member for Kamloops and myself together for close to one and a half hours just prior to the commencement of Question Period.

The meeting came to no conclusions other than the conclusion that we could share with the House so that all members would be aware that we had met and met under your auspices, seeking perhaps, Mr. Speaker, to reach a solution to the considerable tension between us.

As we are both House officers in this place and both members of the Board of Internal Economy, I as chief government Whip and he as House leader for the New Democratic Party, it does not serve this institution well for that level of tension to continue. It does not facilitate our responsibilities in terms of the Board of Internal Economy and our responsibilities to govern the House in terms of its budgets, facilities, and so on and does not serve us well to have this level of tension between us in terms of ordering the business of the House, which is part of our daily existence.

I would like to signal at this time that, provided my right to continue this point of privilege is protected, I would be willing to continue with the hon. member for Kamloops, under your auspices, a series of discussions to see if we could resolve most, if not all, of the matters that lie between us in what might be the best interests of the House, its management and the importance of this democratic institution. It would have to be done on the understanding that the both of us would cease talking to the press in the interim until we had either agreed to disagree once again in public, or to agree that we could resolve the issue and are prepared to share with the House and the Canadian people the results of that resolution.

That would be sort of the one precondition. I have tried to be patient for close to 10 days now on what I take to be some very important matters. I have not always succeeded. I have talked to some press people in the interval. Maybe when I hear some of those words reported back to me I will not feel as good about saying